

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 02120 131507Z

54

ACTION ORM-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 SAJ-01 VO-03 SCA-01 SR-02

EB-11 L-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 SAM-01 SS-20 NSC-10

TRSE-00 NIC-01 DRC-01 /131 W
----- 016245

P R 131350Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6119

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS UR US ETRN

SUBJECT: AEROFLOT REFUSAL TO TICKET TCP CASES

ROME FOR INS

1. ACTING MANAGER MOSCOW PAN AM OFFICE JOHN VAESSEN INFORMED CONSOFF FEB 13 THAT AEROFLOT (WHICH HAS MONOPOLY ON ALL AIRLINE TICKET ISSUANCES IN USSR) IS NOW REFUSING ISSUE PANAM TICKETS PURCHASED IN RUBLES TO PERSONS WHO ARE NOT RPT NOT PROCEEDING DIRECTLY US. HE STATED NEW PROCEDURE WAS CONTAINED IN WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL AEROFLOT EMPLOYEES FROM SUPERVISOR AEROFLOT INTERNATIONAL BOOKING OFFICE NINA BOYCHENKO DATED FEBRUARY 12 AND EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY. FIRST TCP CASE (GERSHKOVIC FAMILY, GENEVA 282) HAS ALREADY NOTIFIED EMBASSY THAT THEY HAVE BEEN PERMITTED PURCHASE ONLY MOSCOW-ROME TICKETS AS PREVIOUSLY, ON AEROFLOT).

2. VAESSEN EXPRESSED FIRM VIEW THAT BOYCHENKO HERSELF NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR DECISION, AS ONLY SENIOR AEROFLOT AUTHORITIES COULD EFFECT SUCH CHANGE IN OPERATING PROCEDURES. HE SAID HE
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 02120 131507Z

IS SENDING URGENT CABLE TO PANAM HEADQUARTERS NYC REQUESTING

ADVICE AS TO LEGALITY AEROFLOT REFUSING PANAM BOOKING TO IMMIGRANTS TO US VIA THIRD COUNTRY PROCESSING (TCP), WHO ARE DOCUMENTED BY SOVIET AUTHORITIES FOR EMIGRATION TO US. HE EXPRESSED PERSONAL VIEW THAT LANGUAGE AEROFLOT/PANAM AGREEMENT POSSIBLY SUFFICIENTLY AMBIGUOUS TO SUPPORT SUCH AEROFLOT REFUSAL TO PERSONS NOT PROCEEDING DIRECTLY TO NYC ON PANAM. VAESSEN EXPRESSED EXPECTATION THAT PANAM HEADQUARTERS MAY SEEK DEPARTMENT COMMENT ON THIS MATTER. VAESSEN STATED HE WILL ALSO ATTEMPT OBTAIN HIGHER LEVEL AEROFLOT EXPLANATION.

3. PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES AEROFLOT ACTION ON TCP WILL BE CONSIDERABLE. OF 758 IMMIGRANTS PROCESSED BY EMBASSY IN 1973, 487 WERE REQUIRED PROCEED VIA ITALY FOR COMPLETION OF PROCESSING BY INS UNDER TCP. AT LEAST ANOTHER 100 PERSONS WHO RECEIVED IV'S HERE ACCOMPANIED OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS TO ROME IN ORDER AVOID SEPARATING FAMILY AT SUCH TRAUMATIC MOMENT. AS REPORTED MOSCOW 262, EMBASSY IMMIGRATION WORKLOAD CONTINUING TO INCREASE DRAMATICALLY AND IT CAN REASONABLY BE EXPECTED THAT NUMBER OF PERSONS PROCEEDING VIA ROME WILL REACH AT LEAST 750 IN 1974 (WITH TOTAL IMMIGRANTS PROCESSED HERE INCREASING TO AT LEAST 1,000). SINCE SOVIET AUTHORITIES FORBID EXPORT OF RUBLES AND EACH EMIGRANT IS PERMITTED CONVERT ONLY 90 RUBLES INTO HARD CURRENCY, PRACTICAL EFFECT IS THAT ALL EMIGRANTS PROCEEDING VIA ROME WILL BE UNABLE TO PURCHASE ROME-US TICKETS. FULL BURDEN WILL THEREFORE FALL ON VOLAGS, IF THEY ARE WILLING AND ABLE FILL GAP.

4. ADDITIONAL RESULT THIS AEROFLOT ACTION IS THAT IMMIGRANTS TO US VIA TCP WILL BE REQUIRED GIVE UP EVEN GREATER PERCENTAGE THEIR PERSONAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING ANY MONEY DERIVED FROM SALE OF PROPERTY. POSSIBILITY OF PURCHASING AIR TICKETS TO ULTIMATE DESTINATION WAS AT LEAST OF CONSIDERABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFIT TO THEM, AS IT CONSTITUTED SIGNIFICANT MATERIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THEIR OWN RESETTLEMENT AND REUNIFICATION WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN US.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY REQUESTS ADDRESSEE COMMENTS AS TO WHETHER THERE ANY RECOURSE TO AEROFLOT ACTION AND WHETHER VOLAGS WILLING AND ABLE SUPPORT ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL BURDEN. EXEMPT

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 02120 131507Z

DUBS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIR FARES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MOSCOW02120
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740236/aaaabhis.tel
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
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30 JUN 2005

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